AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A method of providing a printing service to a user according to a result of judgment as to whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on authentication information input from the user, the printing service method comprising the steps of:

asking a collaborating system about the authentication information if the authentication information is for associated with the collaborating system; and

judging whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on affirmation or denial of the authentication information by the collaborating system,

wherein the user is capable of accessing the printing service via authentication information associated with the collaborating system.

2. (currently amended) A printing service method as defined in Claim 1, the step of asking further comprising the steps of:

receiving a name of the collaborating system at the time of receiving the authentication information; and

specifying the collaborating system based on associate with the name and asking the specified collaborating system about to verify the authentication information.

3. (currently amended) A printing service method as defined in Claim 1, the step of asking further comprising the steps of:

specifying the collaborating system based on associated with the authentication information and asking the specified collaborating system about to verify the authentication information.

4. (currently amended) A printing service method as defined in any one of Claims 1 to 3, further comprising the steps of:

generating charge information for the printing service in the case where the user has been judged to be eligible for the printing_service and transferring the information to the collaborating_system; and

charging the user for the printing_service based on the charge information by using the collaborating_system.

5. (currently amended) A printing service system for providing a printing service to a user according to a result of judgment as to whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on authentication information input from the user, the printing service system comprising:

authentication means for asking a ~~first~~ collaborating_system about the authentication information if the authentication information is ~~for~~ associated with the ~~first~~ collaborating_system, and for judging whether or not the user is eligible for the printing_service based on affirmation or denial of the authentication information by the ~~first~~ collaborating_system,

wherein the user is capable of accessing the printing service via authentication information associated with the collaborating system.

6. (currently amended) A printing service system as defined in Claim 5, the authentication means receiving an input of a name of the ~~first~~ collaborating_system at the time of receiving the authentication information, and specifying the ~~first~~ collaborating_system based on the name of the ~~first~~ collaborating_system, and asking the ~~first~~ specified collaborating_system ~~about~~ to verify the authentication information.

7. (currently amended) A printing service system as defined in Claim 5, wherein the authentication means specifies the ~~first~~ collaborating_system ~~based on~~ associated with the

authentication information and asks the specified ~~first~~ collaborating system ~~about~~ to verify the authentication information.

8. (currently amended) A printing service system as defined in any one of Claims 5 to 7, the printing service system further comprising fee charging means for generating charge information for the printing service in the case where the user has been judged to be eligible for the printing service and for transferring the charge information to the ~~first~~ collaborating system, wherein

the ~~first~~ collaborating system charges the user for the printing service based on the charge information.

9. (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer to execute a method of providing a printing service to a user according to a result of judgment as to whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on authentication information input from the user, the program comprising the procedures of:

asking a collaborating system ~~about~~ associated with the authentication information if the authentication information is for the collaborating system; and

judging whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on affirmation or denial of the authentication information by the collaborating system,

wherein the user is capable of accessing the printing service via authentication information associated with the collaborating system.

10. (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium as defined in Claim 9, the procedure of asking further comprising the procedures of:

receiving a name of the collaborating system at the time of receiving the authentication information; and

specifying the collaborating system based on the name and asking the specified collaborating system ~~about~~ to verify the authentication information.

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11. (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium as defined in Claim 9, the procedure of asking further comprising the procedures of:

specifying the collaborating system based on associated with the authentication information and asking the specified collaborating system about to verify the authentication information.

12. (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium as defined in any one of Claims 9 to 11, the program further comprising the procedures of:

generating charge information for the printing service in the case where the user has been judged to be eligible for the printing service and transferring the charge information to the collaborating system.

Claim 13 (canceled).

14. (new) A method of providing a printing service to a user according to a result of judgment as to whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on authentication information input from the user, the printing service method comprising the steps of:

choosing from a plurality of collaborating systems;

asking a chosen collaborating system about the authentication information if the authentication information is associated with the collaborating system; and

judging whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on affirmation or denial of the authentication information by the chosen collaborating system,

wherein the user is capable of accessing the printing service via authentication information that is associated with at least one of a plurality of collaborating systems.

15. (new) A printing service system for providing a printing service to a user according to a result of judgment as to whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on authentication information input from the user, the printing service system comprising:

authentication means capable of asking a plurality of collaborating systems about the authentication information if the authentication information is associated with at least one of the plurality of collaborating systems, and for judging whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on affirmation or denial of the authentication information by the appropriate collaborating system,

wherein the user is capable of accessing the printing service via authentication information associated with a selected one of the collaborating system from the plurality of collaborating systems.

16. (new) A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer to execute a method of providing a printing service to a user according to a result of judgment as to whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on authentication information input from the user, the program comprising the procedures of:

choosing from a plurality of collaborating systems;

asking a chosen collaborating system associated with the authentication information if the authentication information is for the chosen collaborating system; and

judging whether or not the user is eligible for the printing service based on affirmation or denial of the authentication information by the chosen collaborating system,

wherein the user is capable of accessing the printing service via authentication information that is associated with at least one of a plurality of collaborating systems.

17. (new) A service system for providing a service to a user according to a result of judgment as to whether or not the user is eligible for the service based on authentication information input from the user, the service system comprising:

authentication means capable of asking a plurality of collaborating systems about the authentication information if the authentication information is associated with at least one of the plurality of collaborating systems, and for judging whether or not the user is eligible for the service based on affirmation or denial of the authentication information by the appropriate collaborating system,

wherein the user is capable of accessing the service via authentication information associated with a selected one of the collaborating system from the plurality of collaborating systems.